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SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA; NSC FOR SHAPIRO/KUMAR; JOINT STAFF FOR LTGEN SELVA

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SUBJECT: ABU AL FATAH ON NSF PLANNING, COMMAND STRUCTURE, MORALE

Classified By: Deputy Principal Officer Greg Marchese
for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) In an August 31 meeting in Ramallah, National Security Forces (NSF) Commander Major General Thiab Muhammad Mustafa Ali al Hamduni (Abu al Fatah) confirmed his long-term vision for the NSF: 10 US-trained "special" NSF battalions stationed at the governorate level and partnered with the garrison NSF currently responsible for each governorate. "If there is a political solution," Abu Fatah said, "the NSF will be the main lead for border control and all other tasks. The garrison battalions will do the daily work, and the special battalions will do special tasks, like (combating) infiltration over the borders. The extremist forces are there; at any stage (the NSF) will have to confront them."

¶2. (C) Abu al Fatah identified Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jenin as priority areas for construction of temporary operations camps to house special NSF battalions graduating from US training in Jordan. "The rest of the governorates are not a problem," he said, "and in Ramallah it's okay, we already have a special battalion here." On the subject of Palestinian-Israeli coordination in the security arena, he said, "we're still meeting. The political situation has not progressed, but security meetings still continue. And also the Israelis continue, with their incursions, their arrests, their recruiting of agents."

¶3. (C) With regard to the two-year plan recently presented by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad to Abu Mazen, Abu al Fatah said, "we will continue with the same plan to reinforce security, and law and order -- Salam's plan is built on security." While supportive of the Abu Mazen-Fayyad approach to security overall, he was dismissive of a PA Ministry of Interior role in NSF planning, saying, "I have nothing to do with MOI. MOI plan however they wish."

¶4. (C) Overall, Abu Fatah was bullish on NSF performance, saying, "the NSF is doing what it is tasked to do. Whenever we receive information that we need to be involved in an arrest, we do that, and we hand over the detainees to the concerned parties. When there is a feud, or this kind of problem, we intervene, and then we hand (the suspects) over to the police. Morale is good. What we lack is ammunition and weapons."

WALLES